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INFO EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUXEMBOURG 000029

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE
DEPT PLEASE PASS TO NEA/FO ELISA CATALANO
ISN/RA RICHARD NEPHEW
EUR/WE VALERIE BELON
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PASS TO AMCONSUL ADANA
AMEMBASSY ASTANA PASS TO AMCONSUL ALMATY
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMEMBASSY BERLIN PASS TO AMCONSUL LEIPZIG
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PASS TO AMCONSUL ST PETERSBURG
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PASS TO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL VLADIVOSTOK
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PASS TO AMCONSUL YEKATERINBURG

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TAGS: [PARM](#) [PREL](#) [IR](#) [UNSC](#) [LU](#)

SUBJECT: LUXEMBOURG: PRESSURE IRAN VIA UNSC, AND TARGETED SANCTIONS

REF: STATE 9124; 09 STATE 120288

DERIVED FROM: Derived from previous message.

11. (C) On February 2 Ambassador Stroum and DCM discussed reftel points with Luxembourg Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn and Ministry of Foreign Affairs Political Director Georges Friden. Asselborn agreed that Iran had not responded to "Obama's outstretched hand." He said it was time to increase the pressure on Iran to enter into constructive negotiations on its nuclear program. Asselborn said it was crucial to get China and Russia on board; the international community would have to be unified behind new UN Security Council action. He said additional U.S. and EU sanctions without a UNSC resolution would divide the international community and risk elevating Ahmadinejad's status as a leader who dares to stand up to the U.S. and the EU. Asselborn also stressed the importance of targeting sanctions as carefully as possible in order to avoid hurting the general population, "many of whom are risking their lives to oppose the tyranny of Ahmadinejad and the mullahs."

12. (C) In a separate conversation, Friden clarified that Luxembourg would not stand in the way of unilateral EU sanctions if China or Russia block UNSC action, but that such an option would be a distant second preference behind a unified UN-based approach. Reflecting on recent EU meetings on Iran, Friden shared his impression that among the EU-3, Germany was very close to the Luxembourg point of view on the importance of UN Security Council action. He characterized the UK as "ambivalent" as to how bold the EU should be absent UN Security Council action, and said France was probably the most forceful advocate of new EU sanctions even in the absence of a UNSC resolution. Friden predicted that negotiating an EU common position on Iran could be "torturous" absent UNSC action, with little agreement on how, and to what degree, to ratchet up the pressure on Iran.
Stroum